

# Your County. Your Plan.

## 2011 Municipal Development Plan Review

The establishment of a new Municipal Development Plan (MDP) was identified as a major priority by Council in October 2010. The MDP is a statutory document that provides the framework for planning and development decisions in Mountain View County. Council, together with administration and planning professionals from McElhanney Consulting Services Ltd. (MCSL) has been diligently working on amending policies in the MDP to better align with the desired direction for growth in the County. Based on landowner input and confirmed through statistically valid surveying, Council has confirmed that agricultural preservation is paramount in Mountain View County. As a result, Council will provide all necessary support to the agricultural industry when making land use decisions. The priority to preserve productive agricultural land and conservation of the rural lifestyle is a key theme within the new MDP and it is reflected in the Plan's policy amendments.

As part of the public consultation process, Council feels it is important to summarize the significant amendments made to the MDP. This will help give ratepayers a better understanding of what is being proposed to assist further discussions at future public open houses/sessions.

### **Summary of Key MDP Amendments**

***New Directions*** – This section has been re-arranged to highlight the conservation of agriculture as first priority. Higher density developments are to be directed to the identified growth centres and the economic development corridors to ensure viable agricultural lands are preserved. Reference to working towards “municipal/communal piped” water and waste water systems have been removed and replaced with “safe” water and waste water systems that meet County and Alberta Environment standards.

***Hierarchy of Plans*** – The County's planning system remains consistent but includes more requirements for Area Structure Plans (ASPs) and Area Redevelopment Plans (ARPs). Concept plans are no longer mandatory as part of the development application process.

***Interpretation*** – The County Collector Network (CCN) is referenced within the MDP as it is the officially recognized road network. All policies pertaining to the 800 metre setbacks and residential restrictions relating to the CCN have been removed.

***Growth Management Conceptual Strategy*** – This is an entirely new section within the MDP. It is based on Council's desire to include a conceptual map as a starting point to evaluate development/subdivision applications within the County. The map is adapted from the Canada Land Inventory Class 1, 2, and 3 soils in combination with Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA) mapping. The map includes:

- ***Agricultural Preservation Area:*** The intent of this area is to only allow for first parcel out residential development to ensure productive agricultural land in the County is preserved for agricultural purposes. Subdivision and development applications that deviate from this general policy approach are strongly discouraged and shall require significant justification.
- ***Potential Multi-Lot Residential Area:*** The intent of this area is to identify where multi-lot residential (2 to 4 lots) may be suitable. The exact boundaries of this area must be determined through more detailed planning and engineering analysis. Development/subdivision applications will be subject to consultation with local residents, Council, and site suitability studies.

- **Growth Centres:** Council has identified six (6) growth centres as areas more suitable for future development/subdivision, including higher intensity uses. The growth centres contain areas around the towns of Sundre, Olds, Didsbury, Carstairs, the Village of Cremona (new), as well as Water Valley. These areas are where more detailed studies (ASPs/ARPs) are required but they do not necessarily imply development/subdivision must occur.
- **Economic Growth Corridors:** Council has recognized the importance in growing the County's assessment base by taking advantage of future potential economic growth opportunities (commercial and industrial) along the County's significant corridors. These areas are where more detailed studies (ASPs/ARPs) are required and do not necessarily imply development. Hwy.2 is the major economic growth corridor identified.
- **Confined Feeding Operations Area:** Higher concentrations of CFO's (mainly east of Hwy.2) have been identified and these are pockets within the Agricultural Preservation Area that are not ideal for development, including first parcel out subdivision.

The following are key additions/amendments proposed for the various MDP sections:

#### **Agricultural Land Use Policies –**

- All development applications concerning viable agricultural lands shall be circulated to the County's Agricultural Services Department for comments.
- The proposed minimum parcel size for a new agricultural parcel is 40 acres - currently it is 20 acres. In addition, development applications need to demonstrate that the land being subdivided is for agricultural purposes.
- The maximum farmstead separation remains 10 acres with a minimum parcel size of 2 acres. Farmsteads need to be in existence for at least 10 years.
- The preferred country residential parcel size is proposed to be 2 to 3 acres – currently it is 3 acres. The maximum size is 5 acres.

#### **Residential Land Use Policies –**

- Council has proposed that low density residential subdivision (2 to 4 lots) should only be permitted if the landowner has held title to the quarter section for at least 10 years.
- The proposed maximum total area taken from a previously unsubdivided quarter is 20 acres – currently it is 10 acres.
- Consultation with adjacent landowners and written confirmation from neighbors is a proposed requirement for low density residential subdivision.
- Multi-lot residential development has been decreased from 240 with bonusing to a maximum of 48 lots and will only be considered within the growth centres.
- Reference to “medium and high” residential densities (greater than 48 lots per quarter section) has been removed.
- Minimum lot sizes within a growth centres proposed to be 2 acres – currently it is ¼ acre.
- Reference to “clustering” of residential lots has been removed.
- Reference to all residential subdivisions being within 800 metres of the CCN has been removed.
- Chip seal, at the developer's expense, is included as a potential alternative to paving internal subdivision roads that connect to the CCN.
- Bare land condominium subdivisions for the development of residential uses that allow year-round occupancy are strongly discouraged – currently there is no restriction.
- Council has proposed the right to apply and create exclusionary areas where residential development is not desired.

### **Economic Development Policies**–

- Council recognizes that economic viability is a key component when evaluating development applications but understands the best use of the land must be considered when evaluating applications.
- Inclusion of economic growth corridors (i.e. Hwy. 2) has been proposed.
- New business parks are to be located in the identified growth centres and/or economic growth corridors.
- Road standards for commercial and/or industrial developments are to be confirmed at the ASP/ARP stage.
- Council has identified the importance of home occupations as long as they do not have negative impacts on surrounding areas (i.e. agricultural operations).

### **Recreational Development Policies** –

- This is a new sub-section within the MDP to address concerns and ensure orderly and efficient development of County lands for recreational purposes.
- Recreational developments consisting of permanent structures are not allowed within identified flood areas.
- It is proposed that recreational development subdivision applications include extensive consultation with area landowners, administration and Council.
- Council has proposed that Mountain View County create and maintain a recreational land use and development strategy.

### **Growth Centres** –

- Areas surrounding Cremona have been identified as a proposed growth centre within the County.
- Areas along Hwy 2A, south of Carstairs have been identified as a proposed growth centre.
- Exact growth centre boundaries will be determined through subsequent public consultation.

### **Area Structure Plan & Area Redevelopment Plan Policies** –

- This is a new sub-section within the MDP to address concerns and ensure orderly and efficient development of the County's growth centres and lands along economic growth corridors.
- ASPs and/or ARPs are required for the growth centres and economic growth corridors.
- Existing ASPs and/or ARPs will be reviewed to ensure conformity with the updated MDP.
- Preparation of ASPs and/or ARPs requires permission by Council.
- Due diligence studies may be required by Council prior to preparing an ASP and/or ARP.
- Concept plans should not precede the preparation of an ASP and/or ARP.
- Lot sizes and servicing strategy need to be determined at the ASP and/or ARP process.

### **Transportation, Servicing, and Utilities** –

- All services are required to be to the standards of both the County and Alberta Environment.
- Requirements of “municipal/communal piped” water and waste water systems for multi-lot developments have been changed to include the option for other, more practical methods.
- Holding tanks are discouraged within residential developments.
- Access to the CCN, as an important criteria for development to occur, has been removed.

**Additional amendments**–In addition to grammatical revisions to the MDP, there have also been revisions to the document's glossary, which include deletions of items no longer referenced within the Plan's sections.